SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : The decision has not been taken as yet ....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may sit down. When I am standing, you cannot stand like this. Let me hear him.

....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You do not allow anybody to speak in the House.

....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you want to say something, you may do so.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : My submission is that in case the prestige and dignity of any Hon'ble Member is threatened, it is not as if we are asking you not to take any action in this regard but when action is being taken against certain persons the Collector and the officials ....*(Interruptions)* Please listen to me....*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, what my point is that we should definitely pay attention to all the aspects of the case and give natural justice. If you take any decision without listening to them, it will not be justice....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please listen to him first.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want that report should be sought through the Union Home Ministry to find out the truth. Thereafter you will be able to take a decision on the basis of the Report. Ms. Rajbala Verma is a very dynamaic officer, a dalit woman. We speak of dalits and women's right but injustice is being done to them. In my opinion, if any biased action is taken against her, it will not be a justice.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is my humble request to you that you should give a sympathetic consideration to the matter before taking any decision in this regard and you should take into account the fact that that lady is innocent. It is possible that there may have been some lapse in submitting the Report or some wrong decision may have been taken. But please find out the truth before taking any decision. It will be against the principles of natural justice to take a decision without having listened to what the other side has to say about it. It is not right to rely on the version of just one party. Hence my submission is that I support the motion moved and the matter raised by Hon'ble Shri Shivraj Patil. If you had taken a decision after having investigated into the matter, your action would have been more justified. I request you to ask for a detailed Report and then take any action and in that case, it will be acceptable to all of us.

MR. CHAIRMAN : As Shri Shivraj Patil has stated that this is the convention of the House that comments are sought in the case of violation of privileges. When I sought the comments of Minister of Home Affairs, he himself said that the matter should be referred to the Privileges Committee directly. He is not taking any decision in any case. In this regard, the House may.....

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : You have to take the decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN : This decision has been taken that this is a matter of privilege.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : This is a matter of your discretion. You may seek the comments of the House and Hon'ble Minister but the decision has to be taken by you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please listen to me.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : I am already listening to you and I seek justice.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is the opinion of all the leaders of the House that this matter should be referred to the Privileges Committee. Referring the matter to the Committee does not mean giving punishment to anybody. All the proofs would be submitted there. If punishment is recommended, the matter would be taken up once again in the House. Hence the motion moved by Shri Jaswant Singh and seconded by Shri Sharad Pawar is being put to the vot of the House.

[English]

The question is :

> "That the matter relating to the alleged delay in sending the intimation regarding arrest of Shri Nitish Kumar, M.P., on 28 April, 1997 in Patna, Bihar and furnishing of a factually incorrect information in this respect to the Speaker, Lok Sabha, by the District Magistrate, Patna, be referred to the Committee of Privileges for examination and report."

The Motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI LALMUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the matter which I am raising today is not a matter to be discussed in brief because it has wider implication.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, certain news items have been published under various headings on the Front page and Editorial page of Hindi Daily 'Jansatta' on 4th, 6th and 7th May. The news is that the Prime Minister, Shri I.K. Gujral has stated in an interview broadcast through Star TV last Friday that the American fighter planes were allowed to be refuelled at the Indian airports during the Gulf war. Replying to the adjournment motion moved in Lok Sabha, the then Prime Minister Shri Chandra Shekhar said that he had allowed the refuelling. This newsitems have raised certain suspicious. The people of the country would like to know as to who had allowed it. Why this matter is being raised now ? What is the secret behind raising the matter now ? A very heated discussion was held in the House on this matter on 22 February 1991 and a adjournment motion was also moved by Shri A.K. Rai in the House as to who had permitted the refuelling of American fighter planes at Indian airports ? The C.P.I., C.P.M. and Congress party members had created a furore and criticised Shri Chandra Shekhar.

C.P.M. Party headed this verbal attack and the severest criticism was made by Shri Gujral. I would like to quote Shri Gujral.....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Would you continue speaking in this manner ? This is the zero hour. This is not the time to deliver speeches. Members have to be brief in the zero hour.

SHRI LALMUNI CHAUBEY : I would like to quote him. He had given a statement on Star TV that he had allowed the refuelling of fighter planes at Indian airports. On the other hand, when he spoke on the adjournment motion on 22 February, 1991 in this House the last line of the second paragraph of his speech was :

[English]

> "But so far as we are concerned, I can only tell you that request for refuelling came to us also which we rejected for the reason that we have already given."

[Translation]

At that time he had stated that he did not give the permission and today he admits on Star TV that he had given the permission. Whether India has started dancing to the tunes of U.S.A. ? Have we become sycophants ? It is a question of prestige of the nation because uptil now we have followed the policy of non-alignment, not sycophancy. The foreign policy is being discussed since yesterday. We have our own foreign policy and Shri Gujraj said that this policy was chalked out during the Freedom struggle and was put into shape by Nehru ji. The Prime Minister had maintained in his earlier statement that he had not given the permission and rejected it. On Star TV, he says that he had given the permission. Shri Chandra Shekhar maintains that he had given the permission. Only one of the two statements is true. Either it is Chandra Shekhar ji or Gujral ji who is speaking the truth. What is the truth.....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this controversial matter is being discussed for past few days. Many journalists and friends have asked me to comment on it. But I have no comments to offer because the entire nation and the whole world knows the truth. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji and your leaders are very much aware of the true position.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, all I have to say is that I do not wish to take any credit for the permission given at that time. That permission was given by the Government of this country. It is not important as to who had given the permission. But I would like to say to my friends who had levelled serious allegations against me and especially to my communist friends and these from the Congress Party that I fail to understand the reasons for their having maintained silence over it for last seven days. If that statement is correct and since Gujral ji is my close friend, I fail to understand as to why did he not lend his support at that time. All I have to say about it is that I do not change my statement with the change in times. I stick to what I had said earlier. At that time also I had said that there was nothing wrong in it and even today I believe it to be the right move. Other people may think about it and ponder over it. If they have not lost their voice and can speak out, they will do at least some justice to their conscience.

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : Sir, I regret that some confusion has been caused by a remark made by me in a TV interview in the context of the Gulf Crisis of 1990. The entire Gulf War crisis, so far as India was concerned, carried two parts historically.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait, V.P. Singh Government was in office and I was its Foreign Minister. While disapproving the invasion, India kept in step with the UN Security Council Resolution. At the same time, the entire country was very much concerned about the safety and welfare of nearly 170,000 persons help up in Kuwait and another 30,000 in Iraq.

The House will recall that India then undertook a massive evacuation of people; that is now recorded in the Guiness Book of Records. Since, we were supportive of the UN Resolutions, the Government of India was approached to permit, at that time, overflying of the planes; that was a part of the UN operations.

By the time, the Gulf War actually began and this permit of overflying was given, there was a change in the Government in Delhi and Shri Chandra Shekhar, for whom I have great respect, headed the new Government. I am not in a position to say whether permission to refuel of the planes was sought or given by that Government.

A few days ago, while replying to a TV question, there seems to have been some confusion caused that I wish to correct and with regret I say that this wrong impression has gone. During the period of V.P. Singh Government, no permission was sought or given for refuelling.

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Mr. Chairman Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me time in the Zero Hour. I would just state a few things about the industrial scenario.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Prime Minister, hon. Minister of Industries and hon. Minister of Finance. The workers of national textile units of India are not getting their wages for the last three months because the budgetary support has been withdrawn. The NJMC is facing a crisis because the package has not been cleared. Jute workers are crying at the doors of the factories. In Remington Rand, a known factory, in spite of the intervention of Minister of Labour, the workers have still not got any wages and the unit has not been opened. In the Metal Box factory, in spite of the observation of the BIFR, the workers are crying and committing suicide in Mumbai and Calcutta. MAMC of Durgapur and Shaw Wallace Co. of Calcutta are also facing similar crisis because the Shaw Wallace Managing Director, Manu Chhabaria is looting the empire. There is no intervention by the hon. Finance Minister. Hindustan Copper Unit of Musabani is also facing the similar disaster.

I therefore, request the hon. Ministers of Finance and Labour to take immediate action in this regard. The plight of the sufferings of the NTC workers should be taken due note